

September 10, 2007

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The ability to use the Internet as a communication and learning tool is an essential life skill that all students should possess in the 21st century. As a result, we selected the use of classroom blogs and wikis for the following reasons:

- * Participation allows students to share opinions and ideas with their classmates and teachers in an authentic and respectful way.
- * Journaling in a blog or wiki allows the students to express their thoughts and ideas, while having ready access to those of other students.
- * They serve as powerful statements of students' academic progress, analytical thinking, and communication skills. They encourage students to engage in academic discourse in rigorous and relevant ways.
- * Teacher monitoring of student writing serves to model appropriate and safe online behavior.

What are WEBLOGS (BLOGS)? Blogs are websites that allow an author to publish instantly on the Internet. They can be interactive, allowing teachers and students to begin conversations or add to the information published there. Blogs provide a communication space that teachers can utilize with students whenever there is a curriculum need to develop writing, share ideas and reflect on work being undertaken in the classroom.

What are WIKIS? A wiki is a collaborative web space where people can add content or edit that which has already been published by other people.

Wikis provide unique collaborative opportunities for education. Teachers and students can use password protected wikis to share ideas to create a dynamic digital information resource. Combining freely accessible information, rapid feedback, simplified HTML, and access by multiple editors, wikis are being rapidly adopted as an innovative way of constructing knowledge. ([Encyclopedia of Educational Technology](#))

(For more information, please go to the Searingtown Library website at <http://www.herricks.org/webpages/KKliegman/index.cfm> and click on the "Blogs and Wikis" page, or to go there directly, go to <http://www.herricks.org/webpages/KKliegman/blogswikis.cfm>)

Student and class blogs will be maintained in Classroom Blogmeister, a password-protected, educational blog service. **No personal information about students is disseminated or accessible by those outside the learning community.** Students will not be allowed to post their last names on the blog. Our class wikis will be housed in Wikispaces. Again, **our wiki will be password protected for privacy.** Both Classroom Blogmeister and Wikispaces are advertising-free. Student participation is closely monitored and we **require that students read and sign the attached *Blogger's Contract*.**

To ensure that every student that participates in these online collaborations does so with the consent of their parents, we ask that you sign this form as well as the *Blogger's Contract* and have your child **return it to us by Wednesday, September 12th.**

Thank you,

KAREN KLIEGMAN, LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALIST
NOEL FORTE, TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION FACILITATOR

PARENT BLOG/WIKI CONSENT FORM

Student's Name (Print) Student's Classroom Teacher's Name

Parent's Signature Date